SONG OF THE FIRE.

The fields were white one winter night,
A bard sat by his firelight;
A voice there came from each glad flame
That seemed this songlet to recite:

"Come, touch thy harp, thy wondrous harp,
And let each mellow, golden note
Float on the air, more sweet and fair
Than any from a wild bird's throat;

"For I am here thy soul to cheer,
And make thy hearthstone pleasanter;
Where'er you roam, you'll find no home
Complete without my presence, sir.

"The monarch and his palace grand
Would naught without my presence be,
And labor's son, his day's work done,
Is glad my cheerful face to see.

"The busy clerk, when done his work,
Close by my side finds sweet repose;
The sick man, too's, as glad to view
As he is to smell the rose.

"The children dear, I draw them near,
That I may fill their hearts with glee;
Nor do I fail to catch each tale
Of love so sweetly told near me.

"I light the gloom of garret room—
I make the savage heart to bound;
Go where you may, where'er you stray,
There's joy wherever I am found.

"Thou hast been told how men of old
E'en gave their holy things to me;
But that is past, and here at last
I find myself to comfort thee.

"My rosy glow makes your thoughts flow
Back to the pleasant days of yore;
Sweet scenes of old, true hearts now cold,
I bring them back to thee once more.

"So, till at last time shall be past
O'er all creation I shall roam;
Where'er I wend, I'm man's true friend,
For all creation is my home."
—James Corrothers, in Western Rural.

A CASE IN EQUITY.

BY FRANCIS LYNDE.

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XIX.—CONTINUED.

Kilgrow was hardly out of the room when Protheroe tapped at the door and entered without waiting to be asked. "I beg your pardon if I intrude," he said, bluntly, "but I've got to have a word with you before you go down. I suppose you'll think I'm a cursed cad, after all, but I can't help it if you do. I've asked Elsie to marry me, and she says she will."

He thought he had prepared himself for anything that Thorndyke could possibly say or do, but the forearming had been altogether on the side of resistance, and Philip's enthusiastic outburst of hilarious approval left him quite helpless.

"By Jove, old man, that was the only thing that was needed to make this the happiest day of my life!"—Thorndyke was wringing his hand till it ached. "God bless you—God bless you both! And you're a lucky dog, too: the old man's just authorized me to put the whole $50,000 in her name." He jerked out his watch, breaking the chain in his haste. "Great Caesar! it's half-past three, and that train goes at 4:35! Protheroe, if you love me help me catch it; I've got to start for New York to-day if I have to walk!"

It was a hurried farewell at the farmhouse and a sharp gallop to town, with a breathless scramble for scattered belongings at the hotel; but Philip caught the train, and there was still time for him to scribble a telegram which he thrust out of the car window to Protheroe as the wheels began to turn. It was to Helen, and it read: "Please disregard my letter, and forgive me if you can. I am on my way home."

XX.

THE END OF ALL THINGS.

Like a few other sensible people Philip and Helen deferred their wedding journey to a time when it came as a welcome relief from the round of domestic and social duties for the wife, and a needed rest from the drudgery of business for the husband. Philip had said summer and Europe, but Helen had pleaded for autumn and the south, and she had her way.

"We can go on to New Orleans if you like, but I want to see Allacoochee," she said.

"You're too late for that; Allacoochee is dead and buried—so Protheroe writes."

"No matter; we can see the place where it was. I shall always love it, alive or dead, for what it did for you."

And so it came about that on a certain golden October day, when the rugged outlines of Jubal mountain were melting in the soft autumn haze, and the fragrance of summer blossoms had given place to the spicy sweetness of withered leaves and ripened fruit, a thinly-peopled train on the Chiwassee Valley Extension debarked two of its passengers at the ornate station which aforetime had been too small to accommodate the throngs besieging it at train-hours. There was no lack of room now, however, and when Philip lifted Helen to the platform the empty train-shed echoed their steps as if protesting against the invasion of its solitude. At the arched entrance, where the crowd of vociferous hackmen used to fight for patronage, they were met by a single decrepit negro.

"Hotel, sah?" he asked, doffing his battered hat and bowing with a touch of unspoiled courtesy.

"Yes; you may take us to the Johannisberg."

"Cayn't do dat, sah—no, sah; 'caze hit ain't runnin' no mo'. Dee ain't no hotel in de new town now, sah. Hab to take you-all to de Mountain house."

Philip put his wife into the shackly vehicle. "Is your horse good for a six-mile drive, uncle?"

"Oh, yass, sah—he suttinly am dat; ef hit's anywhars on de plain dirt-road."

"All right. Put the top down so we can see, and drive us around town a bit; then I'll tell you where to go."

Three hundred yards from the station the carriage turned into Broadway. Nature reasserts herself speedily in a semi-tropical climate, and the rank grass sprouting between the paving-stones deadened the sound of the horse's hoofs and muffled the jingling accompaniment of loose bolts in the worn-out hackney-coach.

"Protheroe didn't stretch it much," said Philip, unconsciously lowering his voice in deference to the sepulchral quiet of the street. "You'd hardly believe that I have stood on the sidewalk just here, waiting my chance to dodge across through the endless stream of carriages and wagons and electric cars."

"It doesn't seem possible."

"No, it doesn't. And in that last afternoon, when I was breaking my heart to catch the New York train, the Johannisberg omnibus was actually stopped in a jam of vehicles somewhere along in this square, and I was afraid we'd miss it."

On either side of the grass-grown streets were the costly monuments of the sham city's brief day of activity and life. Lofty buildings, empty from cellar to roof; rows of vacant store-rooms, lined with dusty shelving and littered with the forlorn debris of hasty removals; shattered glass on the sidewalk; withered grass festooning the cornices; and, in front of the dismantled Bank of Allacoochee, the skeleton of an electric car left to dissolve peacefully on the rusty tracks in the roadway. Here and there the desolation was emphasized rather than relieved by a scanty and shop-worn display in the windows of some merchant who had been unwilling or unable to join his neighbors in the general exodus following the crash; pitiable flotsam and jetsam left by the high tide of commerce to bleach and molder on the rocks of an uncharted island in the ocean of traffic. Of these stranded wrecks, the most notable was the store of a dealer in hardware just across from the Chiwassee national bank.

"That is where I bought my pistol on the night of the garroting," said Philip, telling the driver to pull up at the curbstone.

The proprietor of the place was sitting on a spool of barbed wire in front of his own door, and he rose and crossed the sidewalk in response to Philip's salutation. "Oh, it's you, is it, Mr. Thorndyke? I didn't know you at first. Come back to take a look at the corpse?"

"It amounts to that, I'm afraid," said Philip, sympathetically.

"It does, for a fact—just that. All we need now is a good, old-fashioned earthquake: not the fever-and-ague kind you read about nowadays, but the sort they used to put in the geographies when we went to school—a shake with a big crack in the middle of it to bury the wreck decently out of sight."

"It's dreadful," said Philip, not knowing what else to say. "Why didn't you get away with the rest of them?"

The man made a pathetic gesture of helplessness. "There were two reasons. In the first place, I bought my stock and paid for it, so I missed the help of the deputy sheriffs and the creditors; they made the move easy for most of 'em, I tell you. Then, again, it costs money to move a stock of hardware, even if you know where to take it, and I don't."

"Phil, I think you deserve great credit for not falling in love with her."

"I think you're more to be pitied than the others," ventured Philip.

"You're right about that. It's a terrible thing to be anchored in a dead town, and that's what I am—both anchors down and stuck in the mud, with the windlass broken, at that." The man smiled at his own joke and went back to his seat on the spool of wire when Philip told the driver to turn down into the manufacturing district.

In the space between the railway and the river the air of desolation was even more oppressive than in Broadway. Tall chimneys standing guard over many-windowed factories whose walls had never vibrated with the jar of the expensive machinery left to rust and crumble within them; piles of costly lumber warping and twisting in the weather; rows of cottages built for the operatives, tenantless now, save for an occasional family of negroes living rent-free in the industrial desert. It seemed like a desecration to break the silence, and neither of them spoke until the carriage had reached the bisecting street of the old town.

"This is Allacoochee the original," said Philip, "and I fancy it has gone back to just what it was in the antediluvian days. There's the Mountain house; fine old southern mansion, they told me it used to be. That's the old courthouse at the head of the street—where I found the deed, you know. This is Catron's store, and the place next door—well, if that isn't nerve!"

The exclamation pointed at a slim figure standing before a doorway over which swung a faded sign bearing the inscription "Simon Pragmore, Notary Public." The figure lifted its slouch hat at sight of the carriage and its occupants, and out of its sallow and immobile face came the courteous salutation: "Good mawnin, Misteh Thorndyke; glad to see you lookin' so well, seh."

"I suppose that is Mr. Pragmore?" said Helen, a little later.

Philip was wrestling with a ghost of indignation. "Of course it is; and to think that he has the assurance to come back here and go on with his business as though nothing had happened! I've a mind to stop over and revive the charge against him."

"Indeed you won't do anything of the kind," retorted Helen, and Philip changed the subject.

"Have you seen enough of the place?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Well, I haven't. Drive back up Broadway past the Guaranty building, and then take the road up the Little Chiwassee"—this last to the old negro.

Opposite the office building of the defunct town company they stopped again. When the crash came there were many sufferers, and evidences of rascality on the part of the company's agents were not lacking. There had been a mob and a riot, and the company's offices had suffered first and most. The four-storied building of brick and stucco had been first gutted and then bombarded with such missiles as impotent rage could find. It stood grim and gaunt, with battered walls and unglazed openings; a monument more pitiful than its fellows, and yet less worthy, since its owners gained where all others lost.

Helen shivered and drew her wrap closer, as if the desolation made her cold. "Let's go on," she said. "It's too dreadful; it's like being in a cemetery with the graves all opened and the dead people staring at you out of their broken coffins!"

" 'So fleet the works of men
Back to the earth again,' "

quoted Philip, giving the order to the driver.

When they had passed the dismantled Johannisberg, with its once beautiful lawn grown up into a weedy desert, Philip pointed to a last summer's cornfield across the Little Chiwassee. "That was Chiwassee-by-the-Stream in my day," he said. "Lots sold over there for $150 a front foot."

The old negro pulled his horse into an unwilling trot, and the carriage rolled around the shoulder of John's mountain in a cloud of yellow dust; the ruined street suddenly became a quiet country road, and the dead city lay behind them. An hour later they had climbed the spur bounding the Scotchman's farm, and Philip pointed out a comfortable stone farmhouse nestling against the sloping bosom of the mountain.

"That's Duncan's," he said, as they rattled down to the gate; "and there's Elsie—Mrs. Robert Protheroe, I should say—standing in the door with my godson in her arms."

They were expected, though not until later in the day, and Mrs. Duncan and Elsie were presently in a bustle of kindly hospitality that carried Philip swiftly back to the days of his exile.

"Jamie an' Robbie'll be home to the dinner," said Mrs. Duncan. "They've just gone up the mountain to fess auld Johnnie down to greet ye, Master Thorndyke."

"And how is old Johnnie?" inquired Philip, trying to win some token of recognition from the small philosopher in Elsie's arms.

"Ye'll not see the change o' day in him," replied the mother, and the daughter added: "He has but one trouble now, and you're responsible for that; he can't begin to spend his income, and he will persist in burying it under a stone in his fireplace."

Philip laughed, and then it suddenly occurred to the good housewife that her guests must be craving the privacy which is the time-honored right of travelers in all climes; whereupon there was more kindly bustle, and Philip and Helen were shown up to the little bedroom under the eaves.

Helen sat down on the bed while Philip was unstrapping the valises. "She's pretty, Phil, very pretty, and sweet enough to be taken without sugar, I think."

"Who? Mrs. Duncan?" asked Philip, without looking up.

"Of course not!"—with impatient scorn—"Mrs. Duncan's daughter. And under the circumstances, Phil, I think you deserve great credit for not falling in love with her; I do, really."

Philip tugged at the straps until he grew red in the face. "Perhaps I should if Protheroe hadn't stolen a march on me. I imagine it was as good as settled between them long before my time."

THE END.

The Camp of the Great Khan.

The tent in which he holds his court is large enough to give cover easily to 1,000 souls. It is pitched with its doors to the south, and the barons and knights remain in waiting in it, whilst the khan abides in another close to it on the west side. When he wishes to speak with anyone he causes the person to be summoned to that other tent. Immediately behind the great tent there is a fine large chamber where the khan sleeps; and there are also many other tents and chambers, but they are not in contact with the great tent as se are. The two audience tents an he sleeping chamber are constructe in this way. Each of the audience t ts has three poles, which are of spi e-wood, and are most artfully covered with lions' skins, striped with black and white and red, so that they do not suffer from any weather. All three apartments are also covered outside with similar skins of striped lions, a substance that lasts forever. And inside they are all lined with ermine and sable, these two being the finest and most costly furs in existence. For a robe of sable, large enough to line a mantle, is worth 2,000 bezants of gold, or 1,000 at least, and this kind of skin is called by the Tartars "The King of Furs." The beast itself is about the size of a marten. These two furs of which I speak are applied and inlaid so exquisitely that it is really something worth seeing. All the tent ropes are of silk. And, in short, I may say that those tents, to wit, the two audience halls and the sleeping chamber, are so costly that it is not every king could pay for them.—Noah Brooks, in St. Nicholas.

GREASE STOPPED ENGINE.

Exciting Incident Responsible for Nicknaming of an Eastern Road.

"When the road was first built," the story-telling railroad man continued, "which now runs from Harrisburg to Canandaigua, N. Y., it was nicknamed the 'Davy Crockett,' and for many years thereafter the name clung. It was brought about in this way:

"One dark night, when the conductor was taking three passenger cars through to Sunbury, he noticed the headlight of a locomotive in the rear. He instantly informed the engineer of the fact and both began speculating what it meant. The train was running at a high rate of speed, but the headlight in the rear was gaining steadily on them. As there was no lights in the rear of the headlight, they concluded it must be an empty engine. That road twists in and out among the mountains and skirts the banks of the Susquehanna river in such a way as to permit anyone looking back to observe what is going on in the rear for a considerable distance.

"The conductor ordered the engineer to put on more steam, and the latter pulled the throttle wide open. Then followed a wild chase through the night. Pursuer and pursued tore along at the highest speed. Everybody on the cars believed that the engineer of the pursuing engine was either drunk or crazy.

"At last a bright idea struck the engineer. He recalled the fact that a locomotive can make little progress on greasy rails. The contents of two large cans of lard oil were poured on the tracks from the rear of the last passenger coach. The idea proved a great one. Soon the headlight of the pursuing engine grew dim in the distance. When it was safe to do so the train stopped and backed up to solve the mystery. A very funny sight was revealed.

"One of the finest engines on the road, called the 'Davy Crockett'—they gave the locomotives names in those days instead of numbers—had broken away from a hostler up in Williamsport and started down the track on a voyage of destruction. The oil poured on the track had baffled all the destructive abilities that locomotive possessed. There stood the 'Davy Crockett,' puffing and snorting like a Texas steer, the driving wheels buzzing around on the greased track like a flywheel in a machine shop, but hardly moving an inch."
—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

THE WILD HOG OF MEXICO.

A Vicious Brute Which Seems to Have No Notion of Fear.

"The most vicious and fearless of the brute creation is the peccary, or wild hog, of Mexico," says C. W. Bartlett, of Laredo, Tex. "This animal seems utterly devoid of the emotion of fear. I have never seen it turn a hair's breadth out of its path for any living thing. Man is its special bete noir. It displays an intelligence in fighting the human strangely at variance with its apparently complete lack of mental instinct. They are rarely found singly, but go in droves of from hundreds to thousands. Their ability to scent men is particularly marked. I have known a drove of them to scent a man a mile off and strike as straight for him as an arrow flies. There is no use to try to frighten them with guns. The cannonading of a full battery would have no more effect on them than the popping of a firecracker. The only thing to do when they get after you is to run away from them as fast as a horse can carry you. And then there is no certainty that they won't catch you. They are nearly as swift as a horse and their endurance is as great as their viciousness.

"A friend of mine encountered a drove of them in a wild part of Mexico a few years ago and his escape was miraculous. He very foolishly shot and wounded a number of them. Then he took refuge in a tree. The peccaries kept him in the tree all that day and through the night. They circled round the tree, grunting and squealing their delight at the prospect of a feast. He soon exhausted his ammunition and brought down a peccary at each fire. But this had no terrors for the beasts. Along toward morning the brutes began to eat the ones he had killed, and when they thus satisfied the cravings of their stomachs they formed in line and trotted off. If they had not had some of their own number to devour they would have guarded that tree until my friend, through sheer exhaustion, dropped from his perch and allowed them to make a meal off him. The wildcats and tigers that infest the Mexican wilds flee from the peccaries with instinctive fear, and even rattlesnakes keep out of their path."—St. Louis Republic.

Murderous Baboons.

A species of baboon inhabiting the colony of the Cape of Good Hope has become a pest to the farmers by destroying their lambs. The baboons haunt the clumps of cactus scattered through the fields and exhibit much cunning in keeping out of the reach of their human enemies. It is asserted that they have taken note of the fact that women do not carry firearms, and therefore need not be feared. But when a man appears the baboons instantly take to their heels. On this account the farmers have lately devised the plan of dressing in women's apparel when they set out to shoot baboons.—Youth's Companion.

A Correction.

"Benjamin," said Mr. Bloobumper to his son, "I heard you allude to a young lady as a 'peach.' You must not do that."

"Do you object to slang, father?"

"Yes, especially to incorrect slang. The feminine form of 'peach' is 'peachrino.'"—N. Y. Journal.

Hard Tree to Kill.

The "life tree" of Jamaica is harder to kill than any other species of woody growth known to aboriculturists. It continues to grow and thrive for months after being uprooted and exposed to the sun.—N. Y. Sun.

CUBA'S FRIENDS.

The Unexpected Place in Which Two of Them Were Found.

"I never realized how widespread was the interest in the cause of the Cuban insurgents until last week," said a New York man recently. "I was under the impression that sympathy with them was confined to the large cities, where the matter has been agitated by the newspapers and the people are in a position to know something about the merits of the cause. But last week while in Binghamton, N. Y., I had occasion to drive out to a small summer settlement known as Quaker Lake. It is about 15 miles from Binghamton, and the road is through a desolate and mountainous country. One doesn't strike many houses on the way, and to make the trip more cheerless the road passes through the deserted village of Brackney, once a prosperous settlement, whose inhabitants worked in the tanneries. About a mile beyond Brackney I came across a little mite of a house, almost hidden among the trees and about a dozen yards from the road. I would have passed by without noticing it at all, but for a small flag pole which stood in front of it, from which waved the flag of Cuba. Under it was the American flag. A man sat on the ground in front of the house, and, as he didn't look particularly formidable, I got out of my carriage and opened conversation with him on the plea that I wanted a drink of water. I worked the talk around to the flag, and finally asked him who put it there.

"'Me 'n my woman,' he answered.

"'Any interest in Cuba?' I ventured.

"'None, 'cept the interest of a free man in a struggling race,' he said. 'It's this way; me 'n' Sue, that's my woman, have ben reading about this here war fer a long time, an' we allowed we was agin' oppressors and fer them that was trying to throw off the yoke, every time. We can't see but what this here war is jest American history over agin, an' as we thank the Lord fer our blessings we pray for them as is trying ter get the same for themselves.'

"'But the flag,' I said, 'where did you folks ever get a Cuban flag?'

"'That,' said my new acquaintance, 'is Sue's work. Some fellow down in New York was advertising something with a card which had that Cuban flag printed on it in colors. Sue jest 'lowed she could make one of the flags, and she's done it. Sue made the American flag there 15 years ago, and I put that pole up. We love it, we do, but jest now we think it's fair ter put Cuba on top. The eagle ain't a minding what me 'n' Sue do, because we're patriots and love him first, anyway!'

"The old fellow wasn't around when I drove past again by moonlight on my way back to Binghamton, but the two flags were there, waving in the breeze."
—Detroit Free Press.

THE BUMBLEBEE.

The Big Queen Searches for a Home in the Early Spring.

In early spring, when the meadows first take on a tinge of green, and the apple trees put forth their rosy buds, we may often see a single large bumblebee flying low and swiftly back and forth across the lawns or pastures.

These great bees are the queens who have just awakened from their long winter's sleep, and are now seeking some favored spot wherein to commence housekeeping and found a colony; for these insects, like their cousin, the honeybees, live in colonies consisting of three classes, or castes—"drones," or "males," "queens," or "females" and "workers." When our big queen has at last discovered a satisfactory building site, usually a deserted mouse hole, she cleans it of all rubbish and litter, and places within a ball of pollen, in which she lays her eggs. The young grubs hatch out possessed with enormous appetites, and, feeding on the pollen, eat into it in all directions. At last, when fully grown and their craving for food is satisfied, they spin cocoons of silk in the remains of the pollen, and change to pupa. While her family is thus sleeping quietly within their silken cells, the old queen is constantly at work, building up and strengthening the cocoons with wax.

Finally, their sleep being over, the pupa cases burst, and the young bees come forth in all their glory of black and golden livery and gauzy wings.

The first brood consists entirely of workers, who immediately fall to and relieve their tired mother queen of all work and duties, with the exception of laying eggs. They fly hither and thither, always busy and industrious, now plunging into the center of a gorgeous hollyhock or a sunny dandelion, or buzzing about among the modest daisies, or diving head first into some sweet-scented, aristocratic lily or rose, always emerging from their quest for honey covered with the golden dust of pollen. The honey and the pollen thus gathered are stored away, and the eggs laid in the waxen cells from which the workers issued; and the next brood, composed of drones and young queens, feed upon this store of nectar.—St. Nicholas.

It Is Mabel's Chance.

Mrs. Staggs—I have noticed such a great improvement in Mabel Gaswell since she became engaged. She used to be very reserved, but now she is quite affable and shakes hands with everybody.

Mrs. Spiffins—That is because handshaking affords such an excellent opportunity to display her diamond engagement ring.—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

Doesn't Always Work.

Farmer Furrow—Cheer up, deacon; you know all things come to him who waits.

Deacon Dewgood—Humph! Did you ever catch a hen by laying for it?—Judge.

His Definition.

Mrs. Hornbeak—What is golf, Ezry?

Farmer Hornbeak—Billiards gone to grass.—Puck.

SCHOOL AND CHURCH.

—"Black Beauty," that celebrated story of a horse, is used as a reading book in the public schools of Minneapolis.

—Mr. H. N. Higginbotham, of Chicago, has offered $300 in prizes for the best essays on "The Field Museum" by pupils of the public schools of that city.

—Bishop Thoburn now suffers from a broken arm. While riding from Naini-Tal, Northwest provinces, India, to inspect the missions in Eastern Kumaon, he was thrown from his pony.

—Uganda has advanced enough in civilization to have a hospital established by the government at Mengo, the capital. It will have a men's ward with six beds, a woman's ward with four beds, an operating room and a storeroom. A missionary doctor will be in charge.

—Ex-Ambassador Bayard, before returning home from England, procured a reproduction of the chair used by John Bunyan in Bedford jail, as also a copy of the charges under which he was committed to prison, and proposes to present them to the Baptists at Wilmington, Del.

—Dr. Cheyne, of Oxford, the well-known student of the Old Testament, will deliver a course of lectures at the Union theological seminary, New York, in the autumn, on "Israel After the Exodus." He is also to lecture in Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and perhaps at other points.

INDIAN INK.

Consul Fraser Reports on How It Is Manufactured.

An interesting account of the manufacture of the so-called Indian ink, which is made only in the Anhui province of China, is given by Mr. Fraser, our consul at Wuku, on the Yang-tsze, in his last trade report. It is more correctly called China ink—encre de Chine—and from Anhui it goes to every part of China and all over the world. In 1895 about two tons of it, valued at £564, were exported from Shanghai to foreign countries. The materials with which this beautiful black ink is made are sesamum or colza oil, or the oil expressed from the poisonous seeds of a tree extensively cultivated in the Yangtsze valley, and also well known in Japan. To this varnish and pork fat are added. The lamp-black made by the combustion of these substances is classed according to the materials and the grade of fineness, and also according to the time taken over the process of combustion. The paste made of this lampblack has some glue added, and is beaten on wooden anvils with steel hammers. Two good hammers can prepare in a day 80 pieces, each weighing half a pound. A certain quantity of musk of the muskdeer, or of Baroos camphor, for scenting, and gold leaves, varying from 20 to 160 to the pound, are added to give a metallic luster. The materials thus prepared are molded in molds of carved wood, dried, which takes about 20 days in fine weather, and adorned with Chinese characters in gilding. About 32 average-sized sticks of ink go to the pound. The price varies from two shillings or less per pound to as much as seven pounds, there being over a dozen different grades. Nearly all writing is done by the natives throughout China, Japan, Corea, Tongking and Anam with this China ink, rubbed down on a stone ink slab, and applied with a paint brush of sable, fox or rabbit hair, set in a bamboo holder, and when not in use carefully covered with a protecting brass cap. The superior kinds of this ink appear to be used in China, and not exported.—Manufacturer.

Reasons for Divorce.

A North German spouse sought release from a brute of a husband because he advertised her to go to the masquerade as a captive balloon, with a string tied around her ankle. In Idaho of late a wife of that region sought a bill of divorcement, one count in her indictment being that her husband smoked a pipe in their bedroom. In his demurrer he declared that he smoked only the best tobacco; that his wife knew he smoked when he married her, and might rationally have expected the occasional fumigation of their dormitory. He declared also that he habitually smoked on the doorstep, except when it rained, and that his wife objected to his going to the saloon when it did; as to his smoking in the parlor, he averred that he tried it once in his early conjugal days, and had no inclination to repeat the experiment. He was therefore forced to take occasional refuge in the bedroom, but generally smoked out of the window, as a loving and considerate husband should do. No statute was found in the Idaho codex covering the case, which the judge advised them to settle out of court on a basis of mutual tolerance and conciliation.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Not in Good Form.

A couple of stylishly-dressed young women met on Market street yesterday, shook hands, kissed, inquired after each other's health and proceeded to gossip. Suddenly one paused, and, staring at the other in surprise, asked:

"What in the world makes you look so thin?"

"Thin? Why, I weigh more than I ever did."

"But you look as slim as a rail."

The slender girl reflected a moment, then blushed furiously.

"Oh, let me get off the street. I must be a fright," she exclaimed. "I left my hips at home on a chair."—San Francisco Post.

She Wanted to Know.

It was at Asbury Park, and Johnnie Masher had ardently declared his love to Nellie Chaffee.

"I am wholly yours, Mr. Masher," the happy girl replied; "but would you kindly leave your card before you go? Not as a guarantee of good faith," she explained, "but I am curious to know your full name."—Tammany Times.